

One could write a surprisingly adequate account of barrio life by describing only the activities that occur along Siaton River. The barriofolk take their morning baths at the river, while the children play games along the sandy banks. A man waters and washes his carabaos and horses; a small boy turns over stones, looking for fish to "shoot" with his "gun." Later the women come to fetch water in bamboo tubes, or to beat the family wash on flat stones as they gossip. A man comes to the bank to see if his line caught an eel during the night; a group of men clean a slaughtered pig or goat for a wedding or funeral. A raft of green bamboos, cut upstream, floats seaward. Where the banks are high there may be tiny gardens of green onions, eggplants and tomatoes.

In the afternoon a woman comes to the river to get a lagit stone, or moss for a lihi for a new house a family is building. Women return from the poblacion where they have sold their vegetables. Several men wade across the river, carrying a coffin to the poblacion church for the final rites. Children ford the river, as they return from the elementary school. In the evening, by the light of the moon, young girls search wet stones for snails. Later, men return from an evening of drinking and talking with friends in the poblacion guhang stalls. Siaton River, shallow and quiet during the dry season, turbulent and swift during the rainy season, is truly the "life stream" of Caticugan.

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